

6
Four LETTERS,

FROM

JOHN PHILLIPS

OF

LIVERPOOL;

TO

Sir WILLIAM MEREDITH,

On a very recent Occasion.

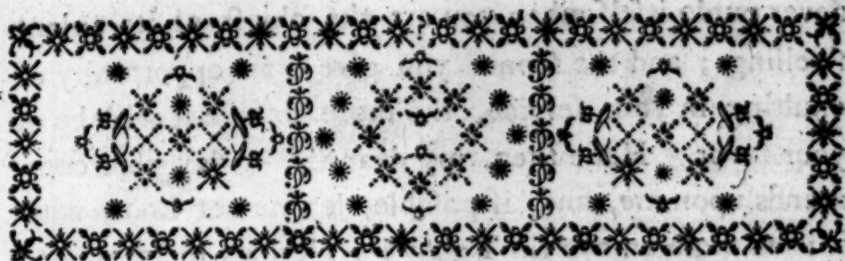
LIVERPOOL:

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M,DCC,LXX.

ADVERTISEMENT.

SUPPOSE a Barrister in any of the Courts should wantonly quit the line of his argument, and fall on the private character of one whom he had already injured beyond *his* power of reparation; and by invective assertions, as foreign from truth as they were from his subject, endeavour to spread calumny over the face of the British Empire to gratify his private resentments and to forward his private views independant of his client's business. Could you, Candid Reader, blame the injured for taking every honorable step to put this Barrister in mind of his duty to community and himself, tho' under a notion of being protected by the Court, he thought himself secure? Whatever you may think of it, should a man lose his life in such a *cause*, I would conclude he lost it in the service of his country; for what may be my case to day, may be yours to-morrow, and,

Alauda non est sine crista.



L E T T E R I.

T O

SIR WILLIAM MEREDITH, Bart.
at the *House of Commons*, LONDON.

Liverpool, April 11. 1770.

S I R,

THE obligations you lay me under daily,
so far exceed my desert, that a life de-
voted to you would be but a bare com-
pensation for them. Mine therefore, is
at your service: in so good a cause, if I
had a million they could not be appro-
priated to a nobler purpose.

No doubt, Sir, a Gentleman so chary of truth, so li-
beral of every other mode of expression in a place, of all
others, the most safe to deliver them in; so moderate in
his expectations, so indifferent about retaliations as you
are known to be, will think me extravagant in this in-
stance of my gratitude. But my heart is prompt and can

never outdo itself when you are the object of its ardent swellings; and the sooner you give it an opportunity of exulting in your service, the more sensible it will be of your favor. Haste then, my dear Sir, to lay your commands upon me, and, if possible, let me not know what it is to close an eye till I obey its glorious dictates, and give you one eminent proof that I am, and ever shall be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

JOHN PHILLIPS.

P. S. Pray give me your opinion——Do you think there is a place on earth that can sanctify a lie, or protect a Lyar?——According to my casuistry, this is more than Heaven itself can do. You need not send this to Mr. Smythe: if you don't like to remain possessed of it, I'll receive it from your own hands when and where you please. Adieu my dear Baronet——Ta, ta.

L E T T E R II.

T O

SIR WILLIAM MEREDITH, Bart.
at the *House of Commons*, LONDON.

Liverpool, April 20. 1770.

SIR,

FOR two Posts past I have been sadly disappointed for want of your reply to my letter of the 11th——

I

I thought it impossible that a Gentleman who honors me so signally in public, could, upon any pretence whatever, deny me his notice in private; or that he could resist an opportunity to illustrate the question—"Whether any place on earth can sanctify a lie or protect a Lyar." I know there are people of shallow understanding and false notions, as well as those of treacherous and cowardly hearts, who maintain the affirmative, and urge—That a certain rank and situation put one man so much above the level of another, that the superior is not accountable to the inferior, in the last resort, in any possible case. But these arguments, my dear Sir, are suggested by timidity and art; they have no more relation to truth and nature than the stars in Cuper's Garden have to those in the firmament. It is not true that nature has acknowledged any superiority where the powers are equal: should they be unequal in their species and manner of comparative excellence, an equality upon the whole, under a definable class, as a Genus, is sufficient for every intention as far as my subject leads me. It is true, that policy and common consent have made a difference; but he who has had the acknowledged superiority, in this respect, devests himself of it, and puts himself on a level with the most humble—yea the most base situation the moment he becomes wilfully a Lyar to the prejudice of another; for it is impossible that any character can be more despicable than his who says what he knows to be not true, with intent to injure a man in a place where he cannot be heard. In this case, the injured has a right to consider the aggressor and himself as in a state of nature, and self defence is

is a law of nature which precedes all laws of society, and cannot be superceded by them. Laying aside this argument, tho' I know it to be invulnerable, such is the contempt a Briton can hold titles and adventitious circumstances in, that, in my opinion, if a Duke injures a Plow-boy, he ought to do him justice.

I HAVE a great deal to say to you, Sir William, on this subject, but my heart is too full of its obligations; and, it is possible, I may but anticipate your own reflections. In this pleasing hope, permit me, again, to assure you that I am,

Your obedient,

JOHN PHILLIPS.

P. S. If I did not know how freely you expose your correspondents letters, in the *gay—e—ty* of your heart, I would both enlarge and be more explicit. However, depend upon't, I shall not lose sight of this subject till it is properly discussed.—Ta, ta Billy.

L E T T E R III.

T O

SIR WILLIAM MEREDITH, Bart.

Liverpool, April 28. 1770.

SIR,

MY Letters of the 11th and 20th current being unanswered, I am fearful of their miscarriage. If
this

this is not replied to, I shall be under a necessity of publishing them, this, and a fourth, that I may have no doubt concerning your knowledge of them: and am, with truth and sincerity, Sir,

Your most obedient,

JOHN PHILLIPS.

P. S. If you will please to let me know where I may call upon, or address you, I shall be under no necessity of publishing, and this I would wish to avoid.

L E T T E R IV.

T O

SIR WILLIAM MEREDITH, Bart.

Liverpool, May 5. 1770.

S I R,

STILL unanswered!——What can I impute it to but that you are offended at my question——“Whether there be a place on earth that can sanctify a lie or protect a Lyar?”——Can there really be an offence in this question?——Is it not possible to harangue on public business and maintain the dignity of a Gentleman without the aid of prevarication and falsehood; of invective and malice?——Does either of them become necessary to any cause in any situation, or circumstance?——Is it possible that all, or either of them can answer any laudable intention, or carry any point that a virtuous man would wish

with to countenance?—It is impossible. He, therefore, who makes use of either in a place sacred to business and to truth, is lost to every sense of prudence, every sense of decency; to every dignity appending to the Gentleman, and is unworthy of every regard proper to the character. He is even beneath the dignity of man in society, and ought to be driven out of it as a creature of the most insidious and dangerous qualities. A Rattle-snake is a generous animal comparative to this: if its bite is instant death, the alarms attendant on its motions, prepares the imagined victim either for flight, destruction, or for conquest. But your sly, hollow-jawed, sneaking-eyed, thin sided Orator; one who sickens at the fat or good of others, sculks in some corner, leans in a pensive posture on his elbow, as if he were hatching a thought; straining his little imagination, in which there is neither room nor light for great designs, for some dark, lame, nefarious accusation; and when he has hatched it, comes forth with all the circumspect gravity and self importance of a taylor absorbed in Heroicks—Hems; stroaks his chin—for beard he has none—breathes, or seems to breathe, or say, or deliver, or speak such a speech, such a tale, for length, for breadth, for thickness and for *weight* as—the Prince of the power of the air inspired him with; and which, a Devil of any modesty, or conscience, or honor, would blush to inspire. When he has done, he makes his bow, wipes his mouth, and thanks the *Lard* that he is a——Pharasee!—Such a wretch among men is what a spider is among insects. He is subtle,

subtle, cunning and patient : he spreads his snares out of his own bowels, and when an harmless fly is entangled, he seizes on his prey without noise or notice, and gluts, not only the natural appetite of hunger, but the unnatural one of cruelty, which is the child of fear. From such a creature neither caution nor innocence, nor virtue can defend a man, as I could easily prove, if I was at liberty to speak of a transaction in a great house on the 17th February, 1769, where more damage was done to your little friend, because of certain ears in the gallery, than is in your power, Sir William, to recompence. Do you think Sir, that so dangerous an animal ought to live?—As you are a moderate man, perhaps, you will say—Yes : but then I do insist upon it, that you will give me leave to qualify your “Yes” with an addition of— with contempt, if not with detestation.

IN my letter of the 20th, I gave it as my opinion, that if a Duke injured a plowboy he ought to do him justice ; and I will now add—he ought to do him justice in the way most acceptable to the Boy, for the same reason that a Plaintiff has his manner of prosecution to chuse, namely—because he has been and is injured, or, at least, is so advised.

You will easily perceive, Sir, that I chuse to illustrate my doctrine with the extreams of nobility and indigence, not from any probability that this will ever be realized, but to give those gentry who are advocates for the exemp-

tions of rank from the honorable call of their inferiors, all the advantage the argument can admit. We will then suppose that it is possible for a Duke——and this I verily believe to be but ideally possible——to be so diabolically malicious as to attack, wantonly to attack a poor plow-boy in the House of Lords! that he shall leave nothing unsaid of him which a head studious in mischief can invent, a cruel heart rejoice in, or a tongue accustomed to falsehood can utter; that he shall say the boy is a drunken, idle, lying, ignorant fellow, when the very nature of his business required sobriety, diligence, integrity, and as much understanding as would enable him to drive a plow. And all this, as is before said, in some measure wantonly, in some measure to traduce others; in some measure to defeat, by anticipation, any truths the boy had to reveal of his Grace: but, principally, to make his master either diffident or ashamed of him, so that he might be dismissed; at all events, intentionally, to deprive the boy of his bread!——Will any body say that the lad has not a right to have reparation for these accumulated injuries?——You will, perhaps, say——“If the laws and customs of his country can repair them, he has a right.” And I will add——If the laws and customs of his country cannot repair them, there is a deficiency in the laws and customs, which every man, and every plow-boy, thus circumstanced, has a *natural* right to amend; and if he had this right politically, under certain restrictions, it would be the surest means of putting an end to defamation, to seduction, to adultery, to falsehood, and to

circumvention:

circumvention: all very great evils in society, and productive of greater turpitude than can derive from the honorable calls of an injured spirit under proper regulations; for, it is remarkable that but few rascals have courage to risque a life honorably, tho' they will run the hazard of dying at a gallows, as an event not present to their imagination.

I PRESUME, if a Duke, either in the wantonness of his head, or the villainy of his heart, was to attack a poor lad with a naked sword, and the boy, by any lucky or designed blow, should kill the Duke, a British jury would acquit the lad of murder, and bring in their verdict—self defence: whereas, it is possible, his Grace did not mean to slay, but to divert himself with the boy. And shall a jury of judicious men be less considerate, less merciful to a man, should he kill a Duke who endeavoured to deprive him of bread; who endeavoured to deprive him of more than bread—of what he held dearer than life—of his honor, of his honest fame; of his peace of mind for ever? “But it is not lawful to kill in private quarrels: “as social Beings, we are all under the protection of the “laws.”——Granted.——Neither is it lawful for any man to injure another by *falsehood* in any place whatever. As far as the laws apply, in both cases, and in all cases, where they do apply, they are the arbitrators. But when they do not apply in defence of a man who is essentially injured——would it be harsh to say, that, in such a case, every man has a right, founded in nature, as well

as in political necessity, to become his own Legislator, his own King, his own Priest? It would be much harsher and more repugnant to truth to say—that a man can be injured in an equal and upright government, without a possibility of redress. If there ever should happen a case of this sort, and if the Legislature made no provision for such a case, because it could not foresee such an event as probable, I will be bold to say—that the aggressor, whatever titles or offices may be inherent in, or acquired by him, is solely answerable for every consequence attending it; and this not at his own option, but in a manner at the option of the injured party. Nor can the aggressor any how evade doing the injured this justice without giving up every pretension, not only to the character of a Gentleman and an honest man, but to that of a man, simply. To err is inherent in the species; but to persist in error and falsehood, without attempting, without wishing to amend or to repair, is proper only to Devils.

HAVING given my opinion freely upon the proposed question, I shall trespass for a few minutes to hold up to you, I would hope for the last time, a faint representation of the many falsehoods which are daily repeated of us both, by those who, however they may mean well, do *us separately*, or conjointly, no honor. If at any time, for brevity sake, I should allude to these people by the appellation of—*your Party*, I beg to be understood in a confined sense, and to be allowed to have in my idea and eye, at that time, but a few particulars, between whom and a certain DASTARD there is such a reciprocity of
under-

understanding, that what may be *imputed* to them, may be *affirmed* of him. I would, by no means, be understood to involve misled partizans with those who transgress, or rather with *him* who transgresses wilfully. And you will please to permit me to set out where they themselves do,——namely——that I was hired to write against and to defame this dastard. Now, Sir William, I dare appeal to yourself and to your best and most reputable friends for the falshood of this assertion. Those among them who know me thoroughly, and such there are, know that I am not of a temper to be a tool in any man's hand; that I hold the blandishments of life so very contemptible, that, without some other inducement or impulse, I would not cross the street to oblige any man however liberal or powerful, either to possess his bounty, or for fear of his resentment. And you, Sir, know that this Dastard's answer to my letter of the 2d of March 1766, was the first circumstance that gave me an insight into *his* character. This was long before I was known to the Gentlemen in the Council of Liverpool. That letter was wrote to *him*, in some measure at *his* own request, on a subject which was worth his attention on a public and a private account; a subject which, under proper management, might repair, if not establish a fortune. He answered in a manner that might pass with one unacquainted with the *ways* of *thriving* courtiers; but as a fish by frequent nibblings comes at last to discern the hook, so your humble correspondent, having been often duped, saw that, my friend, tho' a professor of candour; was
florid

florid and complaisant to himself and others, and *seemed* to expatiate on the subject, but said not *a word* concerning it. These letters are still in being. If you doubt it, they shall, *at your request*, be made public. Could this Gentleman, think you, without an imputation on his *judgment* or his *honesty*, reply in so *loose* and so *guarded* a manner? I chose to acknowledge the *perfection* of the first and suspect the last; for people of his understanding, deliberation, sobriety and attention, do not err unaccountably, and interest is a powerful seducer. If the pretensions of the first mover could be defeated, the defeator would be a gainer by so much, and my correspondent took care that I should never have it in my power to produce a testimony of his correspondence on the subject. Is not my conclusion, then, Sir William, consequent upon the premises?—Had I drawn any other, would you not have accused me of dotage, as *He* does of ignorance?—No doubt you would. The same letter conveyed *his* sentiments about pressing of seamen, which *he* asserted to be “*strictly lawful and strictly constitutional.*” In my reply I *presumed* (and herein lies my *great transgression*) to treat this *traitorous* doctrine freely, but not with half the contempt it deserved, and does yet deserve. *He* was then in the Admiralty, and, alas! returned my freedom so freely in that house, that, to this day, I have not been able to get rid of it, and, I doubt, never shall; if ever I do, it must be by a *chalybeate*, for it is not in the power of chymistry to give gold its usual effect when applied to me. My stomach is too delicate for its weight, and the
little

little which that bowel will retain, degenerates into a mere Aurum fulminans: on the least additional heat, it flies off in tangents of terrible rumbling. Here then, Sir, is the origin of that abundant *esteem* in which I have held and still do hold that worthy Patriot and Quixot, and not in any combination of Party, or interest whatever: nor did this *esteem* break out into words or act till it had many irritations of another nature. The Goat and Hawke, and other caustics were wantonly applied to my former sores, before I ever growled at the indignant insults: and when I begun to express my pain, I endeavoured to do it with a smiling countenance, in the character of Scriblerus and of that more profoundly learned Hypercritic Aristarcus; but the more I smiled, the more *your party*—shall I say *your party*?—grinned, as if they had an exclusive right to grinning, which, indeed, one of them was bold enough to claim; for upon my reading a Song to *Cibb*, wherein a Baronet and a parson made a great figure, with a promise it should be suppressed provided nothing appeared after the Goat and Hawke of the same nature, he very valorously told me, like a Cavalier as he is, that *Soph* had the command of all the furies, and that I had nothing to do but to submit; he further told me what I have since experienced to be true, that if I persisted, tho' it were in my own defence, I should be buffeted and driven from Post to Pillar, without mercy and without end; and that *none would help me*. Whether to attribute the event to the prophecy, or to the nature of a persecuting spirit, which is ever busy in a bad cause, I am at a loss: Be this as it may,

may, no prophecy was ever more literally accomplished, except that the last circumstance of it will admit of a little qualification, and this I declare for the honor of the prophet, without the least tincture of resentment, or even a wish that this fact should be mentioned otherwise than as a testimony of my original patience; that I was not the aggressor, and, tho' provoked, that I was willing to be at peace. I read the same song, on the same day, to another Gentleman, with the same peaceable disposition. This Gentleman kindly undertook the mediating office, and made propositions accordingly, in a certain Clubb on the Hill, but I was held too cheap to be attended to; your friends ran into the same mistake with respect to me, which Sir Ellis Cunliff's did with respect to you; and, I verily believe, both mistakes will have similar effects. As to the rest, the world knows it; and the same world knows that, notwithstanding I came off more than conqueror, I always declared—like a true Briton—I would give quarter the moment it was fought: But instead of that, the vanquished shifted his battery, and instead of bidding open defiance in the field, like a generous enemy, kept skirmishing like a party of *hedge breakers* with an——“Yesterday Sir Small-talk did this; and to-morrow, we hear, Sir Small-talk will do that;”—If at any time I took up my Dame's paper, the third or fourth paragraph always represented this Sir Small-talk as cleaning the augean stable, or doing some other Herculean labour to which I knew his tremulous nerves were unequal: And if I went into company——Lord!——

what

what havock did this *prince of Orators* make among the poor *disputants* at Robinhood's, as if a knack at *prating*, which requires *nothing* but habit and confidence, was any part of the oratorial character: if you believed these men, the CHAIR was nothing in his hands, and this at a time when I knew the poor fellow was either spitting of blood, paring his nails, or courting a sempstress to accompany him into the country, where, he assured her, bare walls were comfortable house keepers. I confess, I had no patience at such a prostitution of truth, and never desire to have any. I am willing to allow a man of no *real* merit, a little political fibbing in support of a fictitious claim to it; but "whatever contradicts my sense, I hate to see and never can believe."

You will please to indulge me, Sir, in enlarging and being explicit on this particular calumny, because it involves others in the accusation, tho' it is principally levelled at one more and myself. No man will be hired but for some particular purpose of the hirer, and, I assure you, as to any pains I may have taken in Sir Small-talk's affairs, I should have taken as much if there was not a penny in the universe, and tho' the universe had been universally of his party. The Gentleman whom this party would more particularly wound thro' my sides, has it not in his power to hire any man to do an unworthy thing; he is too distant, too circumspect, too magnanimous; and, I believe, too honest: this is not unknown to them, however they may make that knowledge truckle to conveni-

C

ence,

ence. Could they either drive or laugh him out of town, as they know they have done a very worthy family, Sir Small-talk might *continue* to make *something* of it: the bare possibility of doing so, is worth attempting, and I commend their vigilance. You see, Sir, that I speak of this Gentleman's apparent qualities with an air of positiveness, because they are open to my observation. As to his honesty, tho' I dont dispute it, I speak of it with diffidence as a matter, with respect to me, depending on common fame which calls him an honest man. However, I will do him the justice to say, that he is so far from being a party in my transgressions, *if I do transgress*, that I, assuredly, do not know what opinion he holds either of me, or of my publications; and is so far from being my hirer, that when I returned from London, after the journey your *kindness* and *Patriotism* procured me, I did apply to him for a sum of money, to repair the breaches that journey had made in my exchequer, and shewed him the probability I had to pay principal and interest in time; all which he considered, and as he thought my security insufficient, he refused me with civility and plainness. For this, I neither blame, nor commend him, as he is the best judge, and has the sole right of judging, suppose him the worst, in the disposal of his fortune. I have since attempted to assist a friend by his means with as little success, and this may serve to shew you, how ill your party agree with truth, when they reproach this Gentleman on my account, tho, I presume, they are exact to themselves. Still, I honor him for his plainness and integrity;

grity; and am very confident, had he a little less of both——so ill judging is the crowd——he would be a more popular man. Could he borrow, Sir William, a little of that——what shall I call it?——a little of that *trifling* “*Here Jan*”——a little of that——“*poor man*”——a little of that *yawning, shuffling, cutting and dealing*, which so eminently distinguishes Sir Small-talk, he would be both a better and a worse man——worse before God and his conscience, and better before his sovereign Lords——the people.

Would you believe, Sir William, what scores know to be true?——There were a few bickerings between a *blackleg* and myself; the black-leg, like your party, had it hollow the first week: upon this I clapt a little Ginger under the tail of my nag, as a skilful jocky knows how. The generous creature reared aloft into the air, he curvetted, he snorted; his ears reached the clouds, his eyes flasht lightning, his nostrils streamed fire, he champt his bit; his hoofs but touched the grass, he threw up his heels with a tremendous jerk, his posteriors gallanted with the winds, and his mane flow'd quick and short, long and expanded as the Northern meteors. In truth, I must have been an Atlas to have held him. In the midst of his career, the worshipfuls whom your *imps* call my hirers, desired I would tighten his rein, and keep him within bounds, not because of any influence which they pretended to have over me, but from humane motives, lest he should bruise the brains and addle the head, and eke the tongue

tongue of poor blacklegs. He snuffed the occasion, and taking the bit in his teeth, affirmed, he was not foaled to be a pack-horse ; that he would stoop to no man's humor ; that he made a point of sticking close to his enemy as well as to his friend, and never would turn tail upon either. Thus I was obliged to refuse to my respect, to my judgment, to my humanity, what I was under a necessity of granting to his notions of honor. And to this minute, he declares he wishes not to live when he cannot sacrifice to this Deity. Another reason, Sir, why these Gentlemen cannot be my hirers, nor, of course, myself an hireling is—They don't think it worth while : their attention is drawn to other objects : neither the importance nor the existence of any one of them depends upon a Seat in P——t. It is true, Sir Small-talk's Seat, in some future house, may be of consequence to him ; but it is not so to either of them, nor indeed would it be so, suppose either of them could, upon a future occasion, produce more *good Blubber Knives* than Sir Small-talk can. In this case, a Seat to one of them would be but as a desert after a full dinner ; but a time may come when a Seat must procure Sir Small-talk desert and dinner too, if happily a good place may be had for a critical, timely trimming. This accounts for his heat and their coolness ; for his vigilance and their indifference : for where-soever their hearts are fixed, I cannot find but they are as diligent and as warm in their pursuits as he is. So much for hire ; now for ale and tobacco.

I NEED not tell you, Sir William that the critics from Longinus to Pope, the first and last who wrote professedly on the subject, are unanimous in advising that every occasion has a manner and language proper to it, and here I might be elaborate in my quotations if Risor's smiles would permit me; but they, like an eastern blast on the blossoming vine, chill my ambition and I shall humble myself to obey without quoting my authority. To cut the matter short—First making my bow to the sober reader to induce his indulgence—Here goes—my service to you—It is devilish good tippie—Let's have a sentiment—True blue, Sir William and down with the rump—Yoicks! yoicks!—hark to him my little honies—A song; a song.—Harry give us Charley over the water—That's very clever.—And the Colonel he did swear, he did swear, he did swear, and the Colonel he did swear.—Oh!—By Jafus! Harry beats the globe at that—And the Colonel he did swear, he did swear, he did swear; and the Colonel he did swear—G—d damn you Bruin Bear—A Lady, if you please—"Flora M'Donnel."—Ah! she was a Flora indeed!—poor distressed Lady!—Hard was thy fate to fall to the lot of two Quixots, the last more desperate and indigent than the first!—Come, Gemmen, the second edition of Flora—No—Demmee—We'll have no *Florias*; nor *Cheshire Capons* neither, Demmee! And so, d'yee see, Sir William, you will give me leave to observe—That an occasional debauch no more constitutes the character of a Drunkard,

Drunkard, than an occasional slip constitutes the character of a prostitute : I commend neither the debauch, nor the sip ; but, certes, the most outrageous *male* virtue, as no man is perfect, would rather indulge the tear of pity than insult over a casual frailty in which the generous, the social and the humane feelings may be involved ; and the defect a constitutional one not only independant on, but repugnant to the will. But was there a better foundation for this reproach than there is, *your Party*, of all men, should be the last to apply it. Drunkenness introduced, and drunkenness must continue their importance here ; the moment the people get sober and open their eyes, down falls dagon, and great will be the fall thereof : so great, that all the Leuidores in France will not be able to set him up again maugre *blubber knives* and *Sardinian ships of war*.——What but intoxication, nearly, very nearly approaching to madness could prepare a reception for such *instruments* and for *such tales* !——If it was at all proper, I should enter into my own character on such a subject, I would wish to do it by a comparison with a *very uncommon instrument*. The Eolian harp is so adjusted to harmony, that every breeze, breathes *into and out, into and out of it* a soothing strain ; a gale swells the tones in fuller concert, and a storm makes discord, horribly discordant. Nicely sensible of the most delicate touch, it soothes the follies, the cares, the struggles of mankind into a most placid serenity ; a stronger and a bolder finger will produce hilarity, consent, and approbation : But the rude hand of the ruffian, such as may be found in all companies

panics where you are the hero, convolves, distorts, and harrows the soul till it bursts into thunder, or whirls the little circle into chaos. In either case,—to make use of an old figure which I shall call by a new name—*a chatamism*,—I have neither deserted my post, nor receded from my point: nor shall I—so help me God!—When the sobriest and best of your friends, Sir William, can prove he has kept three years out of a public house, and this not from poverty of spirit or want of invitation, I shall then submit to be called a Drunkard, without resentment, and acknowledge that, *among them all*, one has been found who can vie with me for sobriety: till then, I beg you will advise them to be silent, or take shame to themselves for their *babblings*, tho' I should, again, happen not—to be righteous over much.

TEDIOUS and painful as it is to enter into the recesses of *their* slanderous forge, I have four other accusations to refute; and I chuse to do so before I dedicate my Pen to rest, in hopes its future peaceful slumbers may not be interrupted. I have been accused of idleness, abusiveness, lying and ignorance. Of the first, all the correspondents I ever had will acquaint me; but as many of them know me but very superficially; as it is possible, both the accusation and this may reach them—I shall not be ashamed to say—because I can prove—that no man in Liverpool took more pains—not to get rich, for that was an idea I never cherished—took more pains—to live than I did. But my fatal mistake was, that I did
not

not know how to assume the gravity of a tradesman. Like Bollinbroke, I thought myself equally calculated for business and for fame, and my vanity, like his, has been properly humbled. The vivacious emanations of my character took the lead in the apprehension of my principal creditor, who to this day, tho' foured as he is by his very great sufferings, acknowledges he never had a more punctual correspondent. Nevertheless, he thought himself too much interested to be at uncertainties, and he took a step which he had a right to take; but which, of all others, put his object at the remotest distance from him: tho', I hope, he will not be, finally, a sufferer. Are your party, Sir, to reproach me in this tender point?—Your's, Sir, whose very frugalities are extravagance compared to my excesses?—Your's, Sir, who are made up of parade and machinations; of refinement and procrastination!—Would you be told, Sir, that—at the height of my credit—when I had three horses in the stable, I walked eighteen miles to market for mere savingness; for the chance only of their being employed?—Would you be told that when I had but one, he was kept in winter at four miles distance for sixpence a week; that I walked often in my boots to take him forward on my business, and as often left him at grass and walked home?—Were you told all this, would you blush and withdraw your protection from G——n!

Tis

Tis true, if upon my arrival in town I found the castle open, I left my weariness and care at the door; and, in a few minutes, I was as much enveloped in smoke and noise as the most *fumugatio* *tergiversator* in company; perhaps too, before I left it, I bruised a *Gad fly* to teach him manners: but this, I humbly apprehend, was neither being idle nor expensive.

WHEN I consider the vileness and number of the slanderous Reports which your party have spread all over the world concerning me (for there are correspondencies entered into for this sole purpose) my soul is ready to gush at my eyes, and all my faculties are consumed in wonder. But upon their re-animation——reflecting on the quarter whence the *cruel sports* proceed; on the unabating vigilance, on the sinister ambition, the unremitting cruelty of *Sir Smiall-talk*; that he cannot thrive while Phillips has a character, I see the cause which has armed the assassin, and I resolve not to fall an easy prey. I rather prepare for conquest, than for flight or submission: because upon this depends my success for the payment of my debts and for public good.

As to abuse, Sir William, those who will give themselves the trouble to read Williamson's paper of the 3d of April, 1767, will see it perfected in its original; and those who will read the papers of the same press of the 10th and 17th of the same month will see my patience; If afterwards I became more irritable, let the insidious

D

assassin

assassin be assured that if he holds a pistol to my breast, I will wrest it out of his hands if I can, and turn it upon himself; this I will not only justify on the Law of defence, but upon the moral Law: Eye for Eye, tooth for tooth is moral, because it is just. When one man has slain another, *the murderer* too late puts his finger in his Eye and cries—it is hard to be hanged—He should have foreseen the consequence previous to the act. And tho' I acknowledge the supereminent excellence of that divine Law which teaches the forgiveness of injuries, I am not so great an enthusiast as to believe that God requires me to be a Lamb amidst so many wolves, while my feeble power can co-operate with his for my protection. I rather believe he has given me the noble sentiments of my nature for the same reason that he gave strength to the Lion and swiftness to the stag.

“*A Lyar*”——My God!——The charge is so general and so infamous, that it is almost as scandalous to reply to it, as it is to urge it: But this much I will say——that if *your party* can point out any assertion of mine, which I cannot prove to be true, I will for ever hide my head and my pen. And to turn the tables upon the *villain* who brings this railing accusation, I shall trespass upon *your* patience while I give you, *by way of appendix*, a list of Lies propagated by him since the year 1768 which I defy the world to shew to have the least connexion with truth. It would be more than laborious, it would be wearisome to refer further back.

To

To trace the lies of *your party* as far back as 61 would exceed my pamphletteering intention and engage me in folios. In this List, I shall not touch upon the more private embassies of my friend *Soph*, tho I know whenever the *cause* requires a *bold assertion* which may not be safe to communicate in *written hand*, he kindly comes and whispers it to——to who?——why, truly,——to Custom-house clerks, who whisper it to *Hall*, to *Will*; to *Jac.* who whisper it to——*the strength of all the party*——to *Bearward*, HIMSELF, who whispers it in the alleys where alone there are “open mouths to swallow the taylor’s news”.——Stop, Sir,——I see you are going to open upon me as if I had reviled the people——A common art—I would, by no means, even insinuate a slight on the humble inhabitants of the alleys: but they will permit me to say—without reproach to their natural and acquired sagacity, and without reproach to my own heart which holds them in great esteem—that their situation and political rank—for want of a more enlarged intercourse with the greater world—render them an easy prey to *political Sharpers*: these cannot exist without the deep toned voice of the people whom they seduce to destruction; the alleys here and else where are practiced upon accordingly, and herein lies the boasted strength, the boasted success of the *impostor*.

As a Sailor expects a storm on the appearance of a Loomb in Harbour, so I, when I see *Soph* come crowd-

ling all of an heap upon his lanckponey, creeping down the hill, expect to be told in whispers—for after a storm cometh a calm—That *Soph* says; aye and says; aye and will swear it, if there *be occasion*, with a most tremendous important shake of the head, a prodigious sagacious face, his brow lowred, his eye scowling, his lip advanced, his right elbow projecting, and his left thrown back like the mighty Crispin's in his last *twitch*—on Col-
lin's clouted shoe——“The *Chair* carried it but by
“three, by *Gad*; and had my *brathar* gone out to re-
“cruit and brought in all his forces, *it* would have been
“worsted.”——No, Sir,——The list I shall publish
shall be notorious lies, and which the little world about
us knows to have been corresponded upon as serious truths.
If after the publication of this list, a Gentleman is seen
to countenance the *party*, till the whole of the list is refuted,
I confess to have no idea adequate to the character.

As to the stale refuge of——“*He is not worth my notice*,” that, I take to be defeated by the *extraordinary*
pains *Sir Small-talk* takes to make me his subject in the
most public place in the kingdom; and I shall sign the
list to convince the great world, to which I appeal, that
these things are so; and that—if they are not refuted, the
propagators must stand convicted of——*Leasing making*.

I AM, Sir, under greater difficulties respecting the last
charge, than all the former ones. Tho' every man's
practice proves that he has a sufficient confidence in his

own

own abilities, custom, on a principle of policy,—that the passions of listeners and competitors might be soothed, —has made it necessary that a man should speak with diffidence, if not depreciatingly humble of himself: and yet Paul boasted when unjustly accused. I would, willingly, avoid either extream; I would neither depreciate nor boast: the first implies either falsehood or impiety, or both; it is impious as well as false to deny, or to undervalue the gift of God for noble purposes: And he who offers his “*poor opinion*” to the public, trifles with himself and the public.—If he has really a “*poor opinion*” of his opinion—why does he obtrude it?—Can’t he fit down and be a poor listener—a very *becoming attitude* for a *melancholy* countenance—instead of being a *poor Prater* when others might speak *more to the purpose*?—I see no reason why he may not to great advantage in several respects. Besides, there is want of honest candor and christian simplicity in the expression. The utmost perfection of a christian’s duty, with respect to each other, is—that we should love our neighbour as ourselves: and can we give a greater proof of that love, than to speak well of him, and to do him every kind office in our power?—The last every man aims to do to himself however he may be mistaken in the means: How then shall it not be a duty to do the first also?—“*Custom forbids*”—Custom is the law of fools—a wise man is a Law unto himself. Swift taught Vaneffa

“ That

"That common forms were not design'd"

"Directors to a noble mind." and shall I not benefit by a lesson which is practised with so much success by others?—"But can an *"ignorant fellow"* pretend to wisdom and a noble mind?"—How ignorant, Sir William?—There is no man but is ignorant in more matters than he can possibly know. If a man is equal to what he professes, that, I presume, is all that is required of him in any station; and I will boldly say of myself that—however ignorant in other matters—I am better qualified to execute the trust of my late appointment than the man who, of all others, you most dearly love, was to be a Lord of the Admiralty, at the time a worthy Peer, *tho' a weak minister*, had the lead in administration. I will go further—I will as boldly assert that I am not ignorant, *comparative with him*, in any thing *essential* to the Gentleman, the Legislator, the man of honor, and the man of spirit. As to the *refinements* which fluctuate with time and place, I enter into no competition with that dainty Prude *Billy Flintwood*, or that more dainty creature *Mrs. Cook the Upholsterer*, concerning them. These *Gentlemen* are welcome to make their bows: to wear their buckles and their hats as they please and I promise them nothing but—my contempt.—Whence then, the insolence of calling me an "ignorant fellow?"—Whence indeed!—shall I tell you, Sir William—From the *daftardly* swellings of a *Craven* upon his own Bank; a Bank not his own but by *delegation*, tho' he tears into its bowels as if it were

were *heaped*. for the sole purpose of *his* convenience. Pitiful, insolent *Cravent*!

If there were any more such ungenteel and cruel insults thrown out against me (for which I altogether refer myself to you who, I am told, were present) I cannot refute them minutely and separately because I have not heard of them: but I shall answer and refute them all in in these general terms——if they were such as implied an inconsistency with the forementioned *essentials*——the man who uttered them was, and is a LYAR. And this I am as ready to proclaim to the world as I am to give it under my hand to *your face*, Sir William——that I am——*your most obedient*.

It is possible, my dear Baronet, that this plain language may shock your delicacy; but you know, Sir, I prefer truth to ornament, and one word or line that makes directly to the heart, is, in my opinion, worth a thousand which play about the head, but do not convince it: which *seem to groan in their passage towards sense; and, at length, with unwearied steps, great caution and diligence; unremitting care and painful study, make a shift to hobble near the hem of its garments: near enough to impose on the vulgar, but not an inch nearer.*

AFTER these private altercations between *your Party* and I are thus adjusted, permit me to mention one circumstance of a more public nature, which alone will
compensate

compensate for the time and money expended on these letters. Before the completion of six years I shall agitate this question in a Court of Law ——— “ Whether
 “ any late Member of a defunct Parliament shall not be
 “ amenable in that court to an injured man, who was
 “ accused of, or was to be accused of ——— no body
 “ knows what; and ordered to attend the Commons no
 “ body knows why or wherefore, to the great damage
 “ and possible ruin of the party ordered to attend, for no
 “ other *apparent* purpose but that the accuser might have
 “ an opportunity of defaming, reviling, scandalizing;
 “ indulging a spleen which is not to be gratified, a malice which is insatiable, and a *policy* which would reap
 “ *the fruits of anothers labour*, and which cannot be done
 “ till that other is *destroyed in reputation*.” I am truly of opinion that an English jury will find that no man can be injured in England, but he must have reparation; and should I be instrumental to lead to this decision, I shall outdo the Patriotic Alderman in the most Patriotic of his acts. He, *in his own defence*, brought general warrants into disgrace, tho’ they were expedient in many instances, such as searching suspected places for stolen goods, &c. and Government will never want their agency whenever it is worth while to risque an application to them; so that they are effectually suppressed as to a very laudable intention, and put upon a more circumspect footing only as to the best. In this case, it is doubtful whether a prudent man would not prefer the disease to the remedy. But I, Sir, shall carry a point when it is carried, which I certainly

tainly will attempt, that shall silence the vile and slanderous senator, *if such a character can exist*, and deter the cowardly tyrant from prostituting a power to the most wicked purposes of his malicious heart, in his private quarrels, which the collective wisdom of society has appropriated for PUBLIC GOOD.

THERE is no doubt, Sir, but a *Patriot* of your distinguished fame will lend me his *countenance* upon this occasion; and next to the exceeding great pleasure of a more private and *interesting interview*, the hopes of seeing *you* in court, *during the debate*, is the most pleasing aspiration of my soul. Till one or other of my hopes is matured into action, may you fare well and thrive; and, *if possible*, may you grow riper for the event. I am, without the guile of Politeness and compliment, Sir,

Your obedient,

JOHN PHILLIPS.

P: S: I promised to give you a list of lies published by *your party* since the year 1768, and I will beg leave to refute, and make some remarks upon, each, separately, that you may see the tendency of them is not misunderstood, viz.

L I E No. 1. It was given out most industriously, that Captain Allen was broke for cowardice: that he was not a Gentleman, and that he was a madman.

REFUTATION AND REMARK. Captain Allen was not broke for cowardice; he was broke when a *Lad* for having been *found* guilty of the indiscretion of a *boy*: He

E

is

is in every sense of the word a—Gentleman : His family is as genteel as the person's who accused him : His elder brother has a much better fortune. And tho' the treatment he met with was enough to make an Englishman, much less a welsh man, mad, he still retains his senses and his courage. The tendency of this was to justify a *peaceable arm* which could not be brought to support the unprovoked scandal of *Drances*. If the tongue was but as peaceable as *this arm*, which I hold in the highest veneration for its prudence, what *fo Peans* might yet be sung in *Larpoo*!

L I E No. 2. It was loudly proclaimed that John Phillips of Liverpool, *Gentleman*, was under innumerable obligations to Sir William Meredith, of Henbury, *Baronet*.

REFUTATION AND REMARK. Mr. Phillips neither is nor ever was obliged to Sir William Meredith. Sir William did write two letters with intent to serve Mr. Phillips; both produced *nothing*.—One of them was wrote at Mr. Phillips's own instance, when he was thought to be of *some* importance; the other at the instance of a friend, when he was thought to be of *no* importance. Had both taken effect, and had both been wrote at Mr. Phillips's own instance, Mr. Phillips did balance both by a piece of Service he rendered Sir William, which he had much at heart. Mr. Phillips also did endeavour to serve Sir William before he *knew* him.

L I E

LIE No. 3. It was as loudly proclaimed that the very bread which the said John and his family did then eat was of Sir William Meredith's bounty: that the said John was a very ungrateful and a very bad man.

REFUTATION AND REMARK. To avoid naming a Gentleman I wish not to offend, I shall say simply—This is not true. As to the answer to the letter which gave rise to this aspersions—and *herein lies the falacy*—no other answer could be given by a person who *wished* to retain the character of a Gentleman.

Tendency of No. 2 and 3.—It these aspersions gained credit, there was no fear that Phillips would be able to wrest the object of his pursuit out of the *hands which hoped* to circumvent him: the aspersions were thrown out in the most proper place in the world to answer this end, (and it is certain they could answer no other) for who would listen to, or correspond with a man so infamous as he was represented to be.

LIE No. 4. It was reported and affirmed that Sir William Meredith had procured a place for William Gordon, Esquire, worth two hundred pounds a year.

REFUTATION AND REMARK. Mr. Gordon never had a place of any value by Sir William's interest.

TENDENCY. As Mr. G—d—n had been rather officious in his endeavours to serve Sir William, it was judged necessary the world should know that Sir William was neither *unable*, nor unwilling to return the favor. True

it is that Mr. G—d—n lives very comfortably on the *remains of his fortune* in the neighbourhood of Chelsea College, and is said to be under the protection of *a good friend*.

L I E No. 5. A SPEECH said to be spoken at Robinhood's in the London Papers, had the heading of it so altered in those published at Liverpool on the 9th of February last, as to leave the reader at liberty to apply it to Sir William, as if made by him in Parliament.

REPUTATION AND REMARK. THIS speech appears to greater advantage in the Gentleman's Magazine for March last, than it did in the Liverpool Papers, and is there attributed to a—*Mr. German*, supposed to be meant for L. G. S.

Tendency. It is necessary the *Greatest orator of the age* should be *made* to speak on every occasion; and if he does not, or cannot make a speech, one must be filched for him. But let me observe, once for all, that *Somebody* takes abundance of Pains to crowd Sir William's name into the Papers, particularly, in what relates to his conduct in Parliament, as if the whole weight of business lay upon him in that House. How true this may be I will not pretend to say; but I will answer for it Sir William, as a *professed defender* of the privileges of the Commons is very much *displeased* at these liberties.

L I E No. 6. IN Gore's Paper, of the 20th of April are two things said of this worthy Baronet, which are
very

very like what I call *political fibbing* to say no worse of them. The first is, that tho he was "*born a tory*" he forsook the "*dirty nest*" as soon as he was "*fledged*," and never returned to it.

REFUTATION AND REMARK. MARRY!——it is a dirty bird that dirties its own nest at any rate: it is nevertheless allowed that a *prudent* Bird may clean it again whenever he shall see *convenient*. If it were not for the *incredulity* of sectaries, who will not believe that a *True-blue-Paraquetto* can mean well to England, there would be no necessity for all this *filth*.——Why then, as

"It is *He* who makes the oath that breaks it,

And not he who for *convenience* takes it,"

so, the fault is their's for putting a *poor* Bird under this necessity; for it is the business of a *Bird* to live and get a good nest——*if he can*. To drop simile and take up the metaphor——Tho' Sir W——m is the only *Bird* in England who was "*born a tory*," if he was not "*fledged*" till he quitted the "*dirty nest*," he is of a very *callow* breed, and of a very *cold* constitution; for I believe he was at least five and thirty before he *found* himself under any *necessity* of forsaking this "*dirty nest*."

LIE No. 7. IN the same paper it is said that he stirred in the affair of M'Quirk and Balfe to oblige the late Chancellor Y—ke.

THE Chancellor is DEAD and no more need be said of the *tale*, tho' the Politicians urge another reason and say——If that respectable assembly in whose presence

fence the motion was made, could have been *cajrolled* to Petition in favour of those who had violated the right of election, there would have been a fine subject for *Patriots* and *Orators* who did *not* second the motion to *speak* upon, and for the *Patriot* who *made it* to write, *privately*, upon, in opposition to it; and thus add oil to the flames. This may serve for its cause and tendency.

LIE No. 8. Two very reputable Carpenters and other tradesmen were gravely and formerly corresponded with, as if thro' Sir William Meredith's *influence* the building of a Man of War for his Sardinian Majesty had been obtained and contracted for at Liverpool.

REFUTATION AND REMARK. THIS, in the language of politeness, is neither more nor less than an *Humbugg*, tho' the vulgar will call it a *Lye*. There never was a contract for this purpose, either entered upon or intended. The truth of the matter is,—The *head* of Sir William's party had not been able for a long, long while, to do any thing to keep up the spirit of it; and it was evidently flagging. How to bring the honest Carpenters, Smiths, Rope-makers, Block-makers, Joiners, Coopers, Butchers, Bakers, and others concerned in building and fitting out of Ships, to petition the King that he would be graciously pleased to dismiss *over-charged Leeches*, to make room for *hungry ones*, was the point. When two Geniusses are in pursuit of the same object, the moment they meet is a moment of importance. At this moment says Satan, who had been rambling to and fro' on the earth,

earth, to Will Deathhead, " I see by thy countenance
 " thou art studying how to *gull* them *Larpoo falous*. I
 " have a *thawght* just come into my noddle that will do
 " for thee ; thou shalt not only retain all thy old friends,
 " but thou shalt acquire new ones, and among them old
 " ROGER, notwithstanding all the grace he boasts of,
 " and the sagacity, good sense and firmness which I know
 " he has."——' The Devil you will——saving your
 Devilship's presence'——cries Will in a transport——
 ' As how pray ? ——' " Why, you must know that the
 " Count de Viri is going out of the Kingdom, and I can
 " easily——Hark ; a word in your ear."——' I un-
 ' derstand you——But how shall I come off, and please
 ' your Devilship, should Roger be willing to engage ?'
 ——' Pshaw——Is there not twenty ways of keep-
 " ing things at *Baye* till the election, in case the Parlia-
 " ment be dissolved, is over ; and then——why, let them
 " discover it as soon as they can.——Have'nt you a lit-
 " tle army at hand, hardened in impudence, who will
 " laugh at the *simplicity* of the deceived, and triumph in
 " your *generalship* as they are, *wisely*, taught to call it ?"
 ——' True——But suppose the Parliament is not
 " dissolved, who will believe my 4545th lie, should I stand
 " in need of it, as I certainly shall, at a *General rendez-*
 " *vous*.'——" Look ye, Sir,——I mean——Deathhead
 " ——If you go on with your scruples, at this rate, we
 " shall never do business ; you remember what *cates* and
 " comfortable Lodgings were provided for you near *Cha-*
 " *ring Cross*, and if you would again succeed, you must
 " enterprize ;

“ enterprize ; in all great designs something must be ha-
 “ zarded. But suppose there is no dissolution—Can’t
 “ it be said——that the King would not abide by the
 “ contract of his ministers ?”——‘ A very improbable
 “ tale indeed.’——“ Zounds !——you puppy——Have’nt
 “ they swallowed twenty ;——aye, an hundred as gross
 “ as this ?——Is there any body that troubles himself
 “ to examine them, except that urchin *Fill-hips*, and as
 “ to him, call him a Lyar, do every thing you can to
 “ destroy his credit ; set your blood hounds upon him to
 “ hunt him out of all company, so that his remarks may
 “ not be heard : and it is not improbable but you may
 “ even shame his friends, who are a modest race and love
 “ not contention, to desert him.”——‘ Say no more ;
 “ ——I comprehend your Devilship—and please ye—
 “ wholly : it shall be done.—’pon *hanar*.’——“ Aye ;
 “ aye my lad !——that’s your cue.——While you
 “ have *hanar* in your mouth, my faithful compeer, Bel-
 “ zebub, in your heart, and my highness at your ear,
 “ you may bid defiance to *Fill-hips* and truth, let them
 “ troop together ever so often.”

HERE the conversation ended ; Satan proceeding upon
 his usual business ; and Deathhead to write to Grayson
 who tempted Roger, who would not be tempted tho’ he
 staggered. Tho’ Grayson was not within hearing of the
 above conversation, and, therefore, was not in the secret,
 he began to *smell a rat* and went no further. The good
 natured honest heart of Baker took it up where Grayson
 left

left it; and even Coventry lugged out his *Letter* in all companies!

AND now let me ask you, Sir William——what manner of man is he who can abuse the confidence of his friends in this manner?——Oh! shame and disgrace light upon him——May he be despised throughout all generations.

BEFORE I conclude, give me leave to ask you, for I have your sagacity in great esteem and an implicit confidence in your judgment, what is the difference, in point of criminality, between *defrauding* a man of his Vote and defrauding him of his purse? According to the little I pretend to in such matters——to defraud a man of his vote is the most criminal; for a man may instantly recover his purse after he has been defrauded of it; the Law, the Magistrate, the whole world will be on his side in the recovery tho' it were a trifle he could very well spare: But when a man is defrauded of his vote, no matter how grossly the fraud shall appear afterwards, neither the Law, nor the Magistrate, nor the world can help him, but all will be against him, tho' his ruin might be effected by it. In what degree of estimation, then, shall we hold the man who *studiously* applies himself to the invention of falsehood that he may one day or other defraud the poor and ignorant of more than their purses?——It would be poor to say of him

“Cauda tenet anquillam”

and

and therefore I will say

Mendax calix non habet fidem,
 which I shall not translate, as I know you love to ram-
 mate upon Latin. — And if I did not know that such a
 man ought to be driven out of all society, I would say
 ———Vale——Vale,

JOHN PHILLIPS.

•• The reader is desired to correct the following er-
 •• ror in page 28, line 19, —*de la* was.